

2008 Fall Meeting
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HR: 12:05h
AN: **P22A-08**
TI: **A Venus Flagship Mission: Exploring a World of Contrasts**
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AB: Results from past missions and the current Venus Express Mission show that Venus is a world of contrasts, providing clear science drivers for renewed exploration of this planet. In early 2008, NASA's Science Mission Directorate formed a Science and Technology Definition Team (STDT) to formulate science goals and objectives, mission architecture and a technology roadmap for a flagship class mission to Venus. This 3- to 4 billion mission, to launch in the post 2020 timeframe, should revolutionize our understanding of how climate works on terrestrial planets, including the close relationship between volcanism, tectonism, the interior, and the atmosphere. It would also more clearly elucidate the geologic history of Venus, including the existence and persistence of an ancient ocean. Achieving these objectives will provide a basis to understand the habitability of extra solar terrestrial planets. To address a broad range of science questions this mission will be composed of flight elements that include an orbiter that is highlighted by an interferometric SAR to provide surface topographic and image information at scales one to two orders of magnitude greater than that achieved by any previous spacecraft to Venus. Two balloons with a projected lifetime of weeks will probe the structure and dynamics of the atmosphere at an altitude of 50 to 70-km. In addition, two descent probes will collect data synergistic to that from the balloon and analyze the geochemistry of surface rocks over a period of hours. The technology road map focuses on key areas of science instruments and enabling engineering to provide greater in situ longevity in the hostile Venus environment.

DE: 5405 Atmospheres (0343, 1060)

DE: 5430 Interiors (8147)

DE: 5464 Remote sensing

DE: 5475 Tectonics (8149)

DE: 6295 Venus

SC: Planetary Sciences [P]

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